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PEDAGOGICS.

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PEDAGOGICS.

BY

H. M. CRIDER.

SECOND EDITION.

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INTRODUCTION.

SHOULD you ask me, whence these verses?
Whence these lines, on Pedagogics,
Telling of the many teachers,
Of the teachers who've been teaching,
Of the teachers who were learned,
And the teachers who lacked learning;
Of the teachers who were active,
And the teachers who were sluggish,
Of the teachers who were witty,
And the teachers who were foolish,
Of the teachers who were friendly
And the teachers who were peevish,

Of the teachers of both sexes,
And their skill in teaching children?
I should answer, I should tell you,
Some have come by observation,
Some have come by conversation
With the patrons and the pupils.
Were you now to ask the questions,
Who are they who told you these things?
From what school-house are the pupils?
From what district are the patrons?
Near what village are they living?
I should answer you by saying,
All the patrons in your county
Have said something, good or evil,
Of the teachers and their teaching,
When the teachers were not present.
Of the many things they told me,
Of the many hard expressions,
Some are truths and some are falsehoods,
Some are proper, some improper.

But they told me many more things
Than the things I here shall mention;
For the patrons of some districts
Never fail to tell the people
All about their teacher's teaching,
All about his many wrangles,
All about his education,
With an air of condemnation.
If still further you should ask me,
"Why do you proclaim in public
All you've heard about the teachers?
All you've heard about their failings?"
I should answer, I should tell you,
I'll declare what others told me,
Whether it be good or evil,
Whether it be strange or curious;
I'll relate a candid story.
The best reason I can give you
For my writing on this subject,
Of the old style of school-masters,

Is, that future generations
May know something of the teachers,
May know something of the strange schools,
Which their ancestors attended,
Through a source that's not official.
I was told to write this story
By a friend of the profession,
While myself engaged in teaching:
"Yes," he said, "go on and write it,
In the style of Hiawatha,
And embalm the curious teachers
Who were teaching in log cabins,
In the days when we were younger."
If you should impose more questions,
And insist that I now tell you
Where these many strange things happened;
I should answer, I should tell you,
That by far the most have happened
In the great State of the North land,
In the State of coal and iron,

Known by many as the Keystone,
Which its natives think surpasses
Any other in the Union,
Both in wealth and noble daring:
Now, I pray, ask no more questions,
While I tell you of the teachers.
Those of whom I mean to tell you,
Nearly all, are country teachers,
Teachers from the rural districts.
Should you ask, is it the author
Who is sometimes represented
As a teacher in this poem?
I should answer you by saying,
Should the author sketch his teaching,
Tell about his own shortcomings,
Through the medium of these verses,
His, perhaps, are like the errors
Of the many who've been teaching:
And if he has had his failings,
He shall be indeed quite happy

With much candor to confess them,
And give some of his experience:
For it is his aim and purpose
To give all who read this story,
But a true and faithful picture
Of the old style of "*School Keeping*,"
With a full delineation
Of the present mode of teaching:
Yet he positively tells you
That he represents none fully,
Whom he shall describe hereafter.

BOANERGES.

THE first teacher I shall notice
Is a man who took to teaching
When our country first was settled.
He was plying his vocation,
When our fathers were but children ;
And the gentleman who told me
Of this teacher and his teaching
Was a subject of his training.
In the language that he told me,
I shall now repeat his story.

“Long ago there came a teacher,
Old and grim, by no means tasty,

And he got permission somehow
To teach urchins in the school-house,
In the school-house of our district.

“He was grim, as I have told you,
And his power had no limit ;
For indeed he was a tyrant,
But the children called him master,
And as such they greatly feared him,
Dreaded both his birch and hick’ry.

“He was rough, uncouth, unpleasant,
And kind words he never uttered :
All his talking was like growling,
All his conversation snappish :
He would frown throughout the school term,
And his eyebrows grew more heavy
Daily as his frowns continued.

“This old teacher was no scholar,
But he had a voice like thunder,
And we’ll call him Boanerges.
Boanerges was a genius,

And he cut some funny capers :
He would often make the bad boys
Stand up in the old *dunce-corner*,
With the dunce-cap on their foreheads.
Yet he always used his cudgel
When he felt enraged at pupils.
He would often walk the school-room
With his big and knotty cudgel
Tightly pressed against his left side
By the bone we call the *humerus*.
When he used his pond'rous cudgel,
He would lay it without mercy
On the backs of his young pupils ;
And he knew of no exceptions,
For he flogged them by the benchful.
Yet his punishment was various :
Some upon the hand he feruled,
Some he punished with his hick'ry,
Some upon one leg he stationed,
Very near the hot stove stood them,

Till they were so badly roasted
That a spell of sickness followed:
Sometimes by the hair he pulled them,
Sometimes by the ears he jerked them,
And upon the ears he boxed them
And he yelled, ‘*Come mind your lessons,*’
While upon the head he rapped them.
But the strangest mode of torture
That the pupils e’er had heard of,
Is the one I now shall mention:
For a vise, he used his knee joints,
Which his purpose well did answer,
When he came to flog the guilty:
In this vise their heads he grappled,
While he beat them with his ruler,
Screams extorting, screams of ‘murder’!
Truly he was better posted
In the diff’rent styles of torture,
Than he was in styles of teaching;
And his pupils feared him greatly.

In the morning came the children,
Came the children like snails creeping,
Ent'ring school with great reluctance.
In the days of Boanerges.
Came the big girls in the winter,
Big girls who were more than twenty,
Brought their knitting and their sewing
To improve their intermissions.

“Boanerges very often
Left the school, and staid for hours,
Loafing at the neighb'ring houses:
Thus he spent the time at noonday,
Which he called his leisure moments.
In his absence, some large pupils,
Who were strong and never idle
Only during study hours,
Took to wrestling in the school-house,
Upset bucket, stove, and benches,
Teacher's desk turned topsy-turvy,
Spilled his ink around, within it,

Spilled it on his books and papers:
This would set him all a-raving,
For, returning, none would tell him
Who had done the horrid mischief;
Which his ire much augmented.
But to gratify his temper,
And be sure to hit the guilty,
He would flog both big and little,
All the school from A to Izzard:
Thus each day, on his returning,
He had sundry scrapes to settle.
While he heard their recitations,
Pupils stood all warped and sluggish
In their crooked, awkward classes;
When some big boy who was strongest,
Bent on making rare disorder,
Pushed the whole class, on a sudden,
Sev'ral feet from its position.
In the evening all the children
Felt quite anxious to be leaving,

And prepared to make a great rush,
Long before he had dismissed them :
They would gather up their baskets,
Get their bonnets and their red shawls,
Get their hats and all things ready,
Ready for a quick departure,
Long before the leaving signal.
When the teacher had dismissed them,
All was bustle and confusion :
Each one strove to be the first one
Out to get and scamper homeward,
Or prepare to 'tag' his fellows,
Or perchance to hunt some ball bat
That he claimed the right of taking.
As they passed out of the school-house,
Each one said, '*Good evening, Master,*'
And each tried to scream the loudest
As he gave the salutation.

“This old teacher boarded nowhere,
But around among the scholars,

And the boys ran home before him,
Got the dogs to watch the gate-way,
So the teacher could not enter
Till the dogs had torn his breeches,
Or perchance his legs had bitten.
Boanerges chewed tobacco,
And he used it so profusely
That it made him very nervous,
And he trembled much while writing;
Hence he wrote a nervous copy,
Quite unfit for imitation.
He was careless in his manners,
He was filthy in his habits;
Thus his comp'ny was unpleasant.
When he visited his patrons,
He would squirt tobacco spittle
On the carpet of his hostess.
Boanerges, though no scholar,
Was yet keen for spelling matches,
And his pupils were good spellers:

But they never learned the meaning
Of the words they spelled correctly;
And the different sounds of letters
Boanerges never taught them:
Neither did he teach them grammar
For he'd never studied grammar,
And he thought it was quite useless,
As it was so rarely called for:
Oft he called it much high learning,
Apt to make the people haughty.

“ Though the pupils feared their master,
Yet they barred him out at Christmas,
And with their united efforts
Easily held the situation.

While the children held the school-house,
Which had now become a castle,
They observed no rules of order,
But they cut and broke the benches,
And they spoiled the doors and windows;
And the door, they would not open,

Which was spiked and nailed securely,
Which had benches propped against it;
Till the teacher signed their paper,
Till he promised that he'd treat them,
Feast them with some cakes and candies,
Apples, or some other dainties.

“In these days of light and knowledge,
Barring out is done away with,
Save in those rare places only
Where the patrons are like heathen,
And the children mean and brainless.

“We are glad that in those places
Where the schools are best conducted,
Where we find the most refinement,
Children yearly make a present
To their teacher, of some value,
And are better, more attentive,
More devoted to their studies,
Than they were in years before this,
When the teachers fed their pupils

With some apples, cakes, or candies,
Near the holidays of winter.

“Boanerges always treated,
Treated all the lads and lasses,
Overgrown young men and maidens,
To some cakes and figs and candies;
And he found in his experience
That the school was well attended
When the dainties were divided;
Though the weather was inclement,
Yet they failed not to be present:
Some who had one day attended
In the early part of autumn,
Some who ne'er before were present,
Did attend on that occasion.”

Some of you know Boanerges,
Some of you must recognize him;
For he represents some teachers
Who were teaching in the by-gone,
In the days of olden school-times,

When the boys did fetch the water
And were sometimes gone for hours;
When the wood was chopped by school-boys,
Who preferred such recreation
To confinement in the school-room.
But we leave old Boanerges;
Since, when free schools were adopted,
With the many reformatations,
With the hard examinations,
All of which he greatly dreaded,
He abandoned the profession.

II.

MORPHEUS.

MORPHEUS is the next we notice
Of the teachers we have heard of.
He was quite a lazy fellow ;
He was quite a careless teacher ;
He was a tremendous sleeper,
And so soundly slept at daybreak,
That his host could scarce disturb him,
Scarce could rouse him from his slumbers,
Though he blew a trumpet near him,
Though he beat a gong to wake him.
Morpheus always reached the school-house
Somewhat later than his pupils ;

And could see, on his arrival,
Children, cold and almost frozen,
Who were standing there and shivering,
Waiting for some fire to warm at:
For his sal'ry was so scanty,
That he had employed no person
To make fire in the morning,
Or to sweep the school-house early.
Morpheus sometimes swept his school-house,
And sometimes the children swept it;
But 'tis useless here to mention
That it needed sweeping oft'ner;
For the litter, dust, and mortar,
On the floor of Morpheus' school-house,
Almost covered it completely.
But his room was more than filthy;
For 'twas badly ventilated:
Hence the air was quite unhealthy.
Caring for the health of children,
Morpheus thought, was not his duty;

“To hear children say their lessons,
And to keep them at their places,
And to scold them when they’re noisy,
And to whip them when they need it,
Is my duty,” thought old Morpheus,
“Only this, and nothing further.”

He confined his pupils often,
Oft confined them, to their inj’ry,
In a certain strange position.

He ne’er gave an intermission
But the long recess at noonday;
“For,” said he, “they come to study,
Not to waste their precious moments
Idly taking recreation.”

He believed that education
Did consist in certain knowledge,—
Claiming that the mental powers
Only should be educated;
Thus he quite forgot the body,
While the soul he never thought of.

Morpheus taught no cleanly habits
To the pupils in his school-room ;
He cared little for his person,
For his manners or his habits,
Since his mouth was filthy-looking,
And his breath was quite offensive,
For he brushed his teeth but seldom.
He was careless in his dressing,
And his hair was combed but rarely,
While the nails upon his fingers
Had a rim of filth around them,
While his clothes were always dusty,
Since he very rarely brushed them ;
And his shoes were never blackened,
As he never studied neatness.
Morpheus was so very careless,
That he never met his pupils
At their seats while they were writing,
At their seats while they were studying ;
And he ne'er explained the letters

On the blackboard to his pupils,
While they were engaged in writing:
This is all he told his pupils:
“Every down stroke must be shaded,
If you wish to make good writers.”
He would never try to help them
In their efforts to grow wiser:
He would squat into his arm-chair
In the morning when school opened,
And throughout the day remain there.
He was dull in mind and body,
And ne'er made the least improvement
In the branches he was teaching,
Since he entered the profession.
He ne'er read a work on teaching,
Ne'er attended teachers' meetings,
Ne'er performed at their conventions.
He had his own style of teaching,
He had his own tedious routine,
And would change on no occasion.

But I think I hear the question
Asked by some one of my readers,
“How did Morpheus spend his evenings?
In his study, with his school-books,
Laboring to be better ‘posted’
In the branches he was teaching?”
Nay, he spent them in the bar-room,
Talking nonsense with the rowdies;
In the store-room, on the counter,
Sucking in fresh streams of knowledge,
Through a long stem, from a smoke-pipe:
Boasting of his education,
Talking of his skill in teaching,
Spending all his brains on nothing.
Now you’ll say it is no wonder
That he always said, “I’m rusty,”
When he went to be examined.
Once I went his school to visit,
Went to see his mode of teaching,
And to see him give instruction;

Went to see the lads and lasses,
And to see what I could learn there,
That would be for my improvement,
That would help me in my teaching.
When I walked into the school-room,
All the scholars stared with wonder,
Stared, for they'd been taught no better,
Asking from their nearest fellows,
"Who is he?" and, "What's he wanting?"
While the children all were whispering,
Growing more and more tempestuous,
While the teacher was embarrassed,
Making some most woful blunders,
We were sitting there and thinking,
Who could study in this bustle,
In this room of sad confusion?
Soon the teacher tried to still them,
Tried to still his noisy pupils,
Spoke in tones like Boanerges,
Called them "noisy little villains,"

Called them "lazy little blockheads,"
And declared that he would whip them,
If they would not now be quiet,
And begin to learn their lessons.
For a while the noise abated,
And some pupils seemed to study;
But just then there came a wagon
Rattling by the school-house window.
Up jumped all the female scholars
Who were sitting near the window;
All were anxious to be seeing,
For the boys stood on the benches,
Straining hard to see the wagon.
Morpheus spoiled these active pupils
By his careless, stupid teaching;
He had failed to keep them busy,
Failed to furnish such employment
For the children of the school-room
As would tend to stimulate them
With ambition to gain knowledge;

Hence his pupils oft were idle,
And, of course, would study mischief,
And would oft befool their teacher
With their many strange devices.
They would often play such trick'ry,
And would oft commit such mischief,
As they knew would make him angry,
And secure to them a flogging:
But no fears their tricks prevented;
Though he beat them most severely,
Though he flogged them without mercy,
Yet they feared no consequences,
For they were prepared to meet them,
And to take them without murm'ring,
And to take them without feeling;
For they had procured sole-leather,
Which they wore beneath their clothing,
Cov'ring both their back and shoulders;
Hence, the punishment inflicted,
When he flogged them so severely,

Beat them with the birch and hick'ry,
Till his strength was quite exhausted,
Was scarce felt by these *brave fellows!*

Morpheus taught in that log school-house
Which had horizontal windows,
Which had long and narrow windows,
Which had great long writing-benches,
Made of planks both thick and heavy;
For they must have great dimensions,
To withstand the constant whittling
Which the children much indulged in;
For they cut the benches daily,
Cut their names on desks and benches,
Till the edges next the pupils
Did a large-toothed saw resemble;
And upon the upper surface
The initials of some students,
Or perchance some fancy pictures,
Could be seen by the observer.

Now, the reason that the children

Cut and whittled at the benches,
Is because their lazy teacher
Had not found them occupation :
Thus they were engaged in mischief ;
For we learn that Satan always
Finds employment for the idle.

Morpheus never made objections
To the whittling of the benches,
As he thought it was a license
That was granted to each pupil.

Morpheus might have well succeeded
In his efforts to teach children,
Had he not been quite too lazy
To impart the best instructions,
Or improve himself in learning.

We now leave this lazy teacher,
Hoping he will quit the business,
To make room for better teachers,—
Those who are more live and anxious
To improve the minds of pupils.

III.

STULTUM.

GIVE me your attention further,
And I'll tell you very frankly
Of another teacher's habits:
Should you ask me what his name is,
I should answer, it is Stultum;
Jonas Stultum is his full name;
And, as many miss their calling,
He had truly missed his, also.
Stultum taught in that old school-house
On the rough ridge near the village;
For when he engaged in teaching,
They would always build the school-house

On some land unfit for tilling,
On some ground they thought was useless,
Worthless for another purpose.
Stultum wasted much time daily
In correcting those who'd broken
Some of his strange regulations;
For his rules were very numerous,
And so constantly increasing,
That no pupil could have learned them.
Had he used them for his text-book,
Had he kept a copy with him,
Had he read them in the morning,
Had he studied them at evening,
Had he dreamed of them while sleeping,
He could never have been posted
So as to avoid confusion.
Though his rules were very many,
And though Stultum often read them,
Yet they did not bind the pupils,
Nor did they prevent the big boys

From committing depredations;
For at noon they clubbed together,
And they wandered to some orchard,
To some orchard not far distant,
To steal apples, pears, and peaches:
They became so well acquainted
With the nearest neighbors' orchards,
That they knew which tree had early,
Which had sweet, and which had sour,
Which had ripe and mellow apples.

Jonas Stultum was quite selfish,
And quite partial in his treatment,
In his usage of the pupils:
Some he scolded, some he smiled on;
Children who were well provided
With the finest, richest clothing,
And whose parents were called wealthy,
Fared quite well with Jonas Stultum.

He ne'er whipped his little cousins,
Ne'er imposed on them correction;

But alas for orphan children,
Those who could not claim his favors,
Or those who had needy parents,
Or to him bore no relation !
Such he flogged without compassion.

He oft punished one he hated,
For some deed he had committed,
When the same was tolerated
In the conduct of another
But a day or two before that.

Stultum was a shameful coward ;
For he punished little children,
Punished them the most severely,
When some larger ones he'd pardoned
For the very same offences
But a little while preceding.

He had many favorite pupils
Whom he never dared to punish.

He would oft compare the children,
Oft compare them with each other,

Making some seem wise and learned,
Others dull and very mulish.

He would often cause dull children
To feel mean, and so discouraged
That they never felt like learning;
Thus the school-room they avoided.

Stultum loved some of his pupils,
Much he loved them, yes, so dearly
That he dreamed of them at midnight.
He would sit by them at noonday,
And would court them for their sweetness,
For their sweetness and their beauty;
But the scholars whom he loved so,
Whom he courted for their beauty,
Were young ladies,—female scholars,
Neatly clad, and quite bewitching
To the young and verdant teacher.
He would often sit quite near them,
Sit and talk for half an hour,
Fondle, flatter, and caress them,

And neglect his other pupils.

Stultum tried to make the children
Think him quite a famous scholar,
When he ne'er had made an effort
To improve himself in learning.
He pretended to know all things,
When he scarcely had a smattering
Of the common English branches,—
Of the branches he was teaching.
Not a branch that he was teaching
Had he ever fairly mastered;
And the subject of a study
He could never teach his pupils.

When he heard a recitation,
He would read those printed questions
That were printed in the text-book,
At the bottom of the pages;
And he was engaged in hunting
What was given as the answer,
While the pupils gave the answer.

Thus he deadened all the interest
Found in any of the branches,
By his superficial teaching.
He taught much that was improper
To the trusting minds of children:
He taught wrong pronunciations,
And he taught improper reasonings,
And he gave improper answers
To the questions of his pupils;
And he used much faulty grammar,
Quite unworthy of a teacher,
A disgrace to the profession.
When he spoke of mathematics,
All the problems and examples,
All the questions with their answers,
Were called "sums" by Jonas Stultum.

Stultum taught his pupils grammar;
But they did some woful parsing,
Did it, too, by his assistance.
When a word was quite perplexing,

When no pupils understood it,
When the teacher could not parse it,
He would say, "It is an adverb;
Let it go, it is an adverb."
When the children were up reading,
He would often tell the pupils
To mind all their stops and pauses,
Without giving them their meaning.
Oft, when teaching mathematics,
He became completely puzzled
With a so-called knotty question:
He would ask some of his pupils
How his predecessor solved it,
Solved the problem that perplexed him.
He was conscious of unfitness,
Of unfitness as a teacher;
But he taught for mere employment,
Or to get a little money,
And to gain some information,
And to study many branches

That before he scarce had heard of.
Yet he called it a reviewing,
A reviewing of some studies
Which he had for years neglected,
And in which he now felt rusty.

He allowed the children always
To select their course of study,
Not regarding it his business
To select with care their studies,
To assign such studies to them
As to them were most befitting.
Many pupils studied hist'ry
Ere they read, with ease or fitness,
The most simple composition;
And he gave so many studies
That his pupils were confounded,
And thus slighted all their lessons.

He considered it a virtue
To protract the hours for teaching
Longer than the usual period.

Thus their energies were weakened
By too constant application,
And his pupils ceased their efforts ;
For they could endure no longer
His outlandish impositions.

He would stuff instead of teach them ;
He would cram them with his lectures,
Which were senseless and erroneous.

Stultum practised well his pupils
On the exercise intended
To be given when some strangers,
Or directors, paid a visit,
Paid a visit to the school-room.
When a stranger called to see him,
He would summon his best classes,
Ask them to recite the lesson
They'd prepared for such occasions ;
After this, he made excuses
For their having done no better.

He would speak against the teacher

Who had been his predecessor,
Him who taught the previous winter,
And was no doubt far superior
To this foolish, boasting fellow.

Stultum was a worthless teacher,
Since he felt but little interest
In the school he'd undertaken:
A profession was his object,
Therapeutics was his study,
And he thought himself more worthy,
More refined, and much more learned,
Than the rest of mankind deemed him.

Stultum once had been at college,
And became so egotistic,
And became so much inflated
With the little he had studied,
That the people could not bear with
All his many vain pretensions.
When in company he mingled,
He was very much affected,

Much affected in his manners,
And so selfish in his habits,
That his presence was repulsive.
He was pompous in his carriage,
And pretended to know all things.
He oft searched his dictionary
For a word he thought high-sounding,
Which he introduced in comp'ny,
And would use it very often.

Stultum was quite unsuccessful
While engaged in this vocation.
Hence he quit this great profession,
And despised it ever after,
Since his teaching was a failure.

IV.

UXORIOUS.

YOUNG Uxorious is another
Of the many who've been teaching.
He was young and quite unguarded;
He was fond of ladies' comp'ny,
And he sang the song of Cupid;
"As unto the boy the rod is,
So unto the man is woman,
Useless one without the other."
While he sang the song of Cupid,
He met with a nymph who loved him,
Loved him dearly, loved him strangely:
With her beauty he was smitten,

And his heart longed to be with her ;
Thus he often went to see her :
In the evening, when the school closed,
He would try to make a visit
To the house of his young sweetheart ;
And with her he often tarried,
Tarried with her till the morning,
And went to his school directly
From the house of her he loved so,
Went sometimes without his breakfast,
Sometimes ate some pies or sweet cakes
At the house of his beloved,
Ere they had adjourned their courting ;
And sometimes she gave him breakfast
In a package wrapped with paper,
Which he ate on his way thither.

Young Uxorious was a teacher
And a wooer at the same time—
Loved his school less than his sweetheart.
Thus he did neglect the former,

Since he gave his whole attention
To his angel, as he called her,
To Dulcinea, his fair one.
Thus enamored of her beauty,
Ever anxious to be near her,
He cared little for his school now,—
He abhorred his dull school routine,
And felt restless and unhappy
In the absence of his darling.
Though he lived a distance from her,
Yet he often paid her visits
At her home beyond the meadows,
'Cross the meadows and the woodland,
Where his angel dwelt securely
In her father's rustic mansion.
In the evening, when the school closed,
He was eager to be leaving;
And he hurried off to see her,
While he studied how to greet her.
He passed over moors and meadows,

Left behind him barns and houses,
Wandered on, of pleasure dreaming,
Till he reached her home at sunset.
There he halted, there he tarried;
And he got so well acquainted
That he often went on Friday,
Waited there till Monday morning,
Then departed to his school-house,
Which he left with less reluctance
But the Friday night preceding.

Thus his visits were repeated
Till their hearts were bound together
By a cord of Cupid's weaving,
A cord never to be broken,
Since 'twas followed by another,
By a cord that bound them firmly,
Bound them sweetly for a lifetime—
'Twas the cord of matrimony.

I shall now go on to tell you
Something of the famous wedding

That was held for young Uxorious.
In the evening he was married
To the one his heart had chosen,
All the boys throughout the district
Came with fifes and drums and cow-bells,
Dinner-horns and old tin buckets,
Came with guns and great horse-fiddles,
To make music for the teacher,
For the teacher and his lady.
The loud din of these musicians
Was so very, very hideous
That it startled all the inmates,
All the guests and all the household.
With their rattling and their ringing,
With their fifing and their fiddling,
With their drumming and their shooting,
They had frightened every creature
Found around that habitation:
They had scared both ducks and chickens,
They had frightened pigs and horses ;

All the dogs and cows were frightened,
All the pigs were loudly squealing,
All the ducks and geese were cackling,
Cows were roaring, horses neighing,
Dogs were barking, roosters crowing,
Every thing was in commotion,
And there was a great confusion.

It was through this smitten teacher,
By the force of his example,
Or by some means that we know not,
All the district was infected;
Young men all were fascinated,
Captivated by the ladies,
And there came a gen'ral marrying
Of the farmers' charming daughters,
In this strange and curious district,
Where Uxorious found the damsel
Whom he wooed, and whom he married.
With these words we leave Uxorious,
Since 'tis needless here to mention

That the ladies of this district
Hope that many more such teachers,
Guiding young men by example,
Introducing such wise customs,
May engage their school hereafter.

V.

NINNY NUMSKULL.

IF you yet will give attention,
I shall tell you now a story
Of a certain female teacher,
Who was not like Minnie Volo,
Whom I'll tell you of hereafter.
Should you now feel very anxious
That this lady's name be mentioned,
I should answer, I should tell you,
She was known as Ninny Numskull,
But her mother called her "*Schussel*:"
For she stammered, and she muttered,
And she giggled, and she stuttered,

And she hobbled, and she staggered,
And she tripped herself in walking;
For she stumbled, and she blundered,
And her talk her walk resembled;
All her walking, all her talking,
Was by fits and jerks, they tell me.

She had quite a poor idea
Of the mind, or of its training;
But she entered the profession
Through her over-partial uncle,
Who was chosen school director.

She secured that school convenient
To her father's rural dwelling;
And her parents urged the matter,
Saying, "She can't board with strangers;
For," said they, "her *education*
Has already cost a plenty,
Since she went one term to college,
During which we paid her boarding,
Paid her many large expenses,

For she boarded in the college.”

Ninny was unfit to govern
Or control so many children.

A selection of small children,
Whom she gathered up in spring-time,
For whom charged the small tuition
Mentioned in her lean subscription,
Formed the first school for Miss Ninny:
In this school she well succeeded,
As her pupils ne'er accused her
Of unfitness as a teacher.

She imagined she could read well,
Since she imitated some one
Whom she thought a model reader;
But she knew not that the people
Saw her reading was affected.

She would court the school commis'ner,
Flatter him for gen'rous numbers
At the next examination.

She permitted all her pupils,

All the children of both sexes,
To enjoy recess together;
At its close she tapped the window,
To bring in the strolling children,
Who felt no great inclination
To return into their prison.

Ninny's strange mode of instructing
Never made the pupils thinkers:
She would ask her scholars questions,
And would give the answer also;
Having thus herself responded,
She again would quickly ask them,
"Is that answer not the right one?"
And her pupils all said, "Yes, ma'am."
While she thus was asking questions,
None essayed to give an answer
Until they had heard her statement;
For they knew she always asked them,
So that they could answer, "Yes, ma'am."

Ninny oft would scold her pupils,

Without thinking how unseemly
And how useless is the custom.

Scolding is a monstrous evil,
And it is a vice most truly,
And should ne'er be tolerated.
In a school or in a fam'ly,
It should never be permitted;
Since the person who is scolded,
Who is scolded much and often,
Learns indifference to such treatment;
And the person who indulges
In this hateful disposition
Forms a stern and vicious habit.

She would often threat to punish,
But oft failed to keep her promise.
Thus the children ceased to fear her,
Learned to set at naught her threat'nings,
Trifled with her regulations.

If some lad had been unruly,
She would punish him severely

By obliging him for hours
To sit down between two school-girls
Who, it was reported, loved him.
Of all punishment inflicted,
This she thought the most unpleasant
For a lad of modest feelings;
Since young men whom she most fancied
Always kept so distant from her:
Though she powdered, though she painted,
Yet it always was reported
That she ne'er could find a lover.

When her pupils "*learned their spelling,*"
You could hear a constant buzzing
Coming up from all the small groups,
From the many groups of children
That were scattered through the school-room.

Ninny failed to find employment
For her lively, restless pupils;
Thus, abandoned to their mischief,
They did sometimes bite each other,

Sometimes they did scratch each other,
And they bumped their heads together,
And with chalk they marked each other,
And with pens they jagged each other,
And they often hit each other

With some wads they'd made of paper

Sometimes, when she meant to punish,
She would thrust the guilty pupil
Into some dark room or cellar,
Where he cried and screamed and trembled,
Till his strength was quite exhausted.
Some so frightened were in this way
That their health was much affected.

To the pupils just beginning,
Ninny always taught the letters,
All the letters, at one lesson,
In a string, from A to Izzard:
But to get the lesson perfect
It would take them all the winter.

With those pupils who were reading,

She was satisfied completely,
When they'd "mind their stops and pauses."

Though Miss Numskull knew but little
Of a proper education;
Though she was, as I have told you,
Quite unfit to govern children;
Yet her foolish blind employers,
Ignoramus school directors,
Not directors, but directed,
Those who did as others told them,
Poor old women of male gender,
Did engage her for two sessions;
Since they could employ her cheaper
Than some teacher much more worthy,
Who would not have taught them errors,
Which are always very hurtful,
And must be unlearned hereafter.

But we leave the worthless Ninny,
As the school-board ne'er employed her
After she had taught two sessions.

In this district where she figured,
They employed no lady teacher,
Until she was quite forgotten.

There are other female teachers
Whom this story would apply to,
Would apply to, with this difference,
That she failed to find employment
After having taught two sessions.

VI.

MINNIE VOLO.

I FEEL anxious now to tell you
Of another lady teacher,
Who had great success in teaching,
And whose name was Minnie Volo.

She was an accomplished teacher,
She was quite a model mistress,
Ruling those with moderation
Who to her had been intrusted.

Every pupil was desirous
To obey her rules of order.

She was friendly in her bearing,
And she loved the little children,

And they loved her for her kindness.

Those young children who were timid,
Minnie Volo never frightened;
For she ne'er was harsh or boist'rous,
And she never thought of scolding,
But with gentleness she ruled them,
Yet with firmness and decision.

She was cautious that the children
Should respect her in their conduct,
In their language and proceedings.
She was not controlled by pupils,
To their whims she ne'er submitted;
She ne'er yielded to her scholars
Any of her rules of order:
But she was a royal mistress,
Ruling all with gentle accents
Who came under her instruction.
And she kept the children busy;
Hence they had no time for mischief.
She would praise her pupils' merits,

Till they vied for her approval.
She intrusted the most vicious
With some matters of importance,
As if they could well be trusted.

By a nobler class of motives,
She would urge her pupils onward;
Trusting more to moral suasion
Than to shame or bod'ly suff'ring;
Though there doubtless may be rude boys
Who need something very active,
Need the rod of birch and hick'ry
Wielded by some robust teacher.
Minnie always well succeeded
In controlling the most vicious
By her quiet style of treatment,
Though they knew not how she did it.
But her school was all she cared for ;
When she slept, she dreamed about it,
When she 'woke, she spoke about it,
She was always thinking of it,

Thinking of some mode of teaching
That might make her more successful.

At her boarding-house they loved her,
For her quiet disposition.

She was cautious in her language,
She was winning in her manners;
She was careful what impressions
She might make on minds so tender.

The most vicious were directed
By her mild and kind instruction.

She had made herself acquainted
With each branch that she was teaching,
With each pupil's disposition,
With the parents of the children;
Hence she gained a reputation
Which the worthless ne'er acquire.
She had made the patrons anxious
To accept her invitations
To make visits to the school-room,
And take note of her improvements.

She ne'er heard a recitation
Till she had secured attention
And suppressed all noise and whisp'ring.

She obliged her pupils often
To review with care their studies,
So that all felt well acquainted
With each branch that they had studied;
And she ne'er allowed a pupil
To pursue too many branches,
Knowing that the mind is weakened,
When it is so much divided;
Knowing that 'tis best for pupils
To learn well whate'er they study.

Minnie Volo was a scholar,
And a very active student;
She made use of fluent diction,
And she spoke so very lovely,
And she was so neat and perfect,
So enchanting in her manners,
That her pupils strove to please her,

That they could not bear to grieve her.

But the children and the patrons
Were not all who loved this "school-marm:"
For Miss Minnie quit the school-room,
Not for want of compensation,
Not because she lacked employers,
But because one favored mortal
Did engage her heart forever.

It ne'er happens that a lady,
So accomplished and so winning
As our charming Minnie Volo,
If engaged in this profession,
Fails to get an invitation
To abandon the profession.
Thus, "farewell" said Minnie Volo
To the school-room and its duties
Where her heart was fondly centred,
Till she found another object
Which she loved with more devotion.

Many years have passed since Minnie

Left her school and its surroundings;
And her pupils have not seen her
In that quiet little village,
Since that first farewell she gave them:
Where she's gone they've often wondered,
But in vain they have inquired:
Would she pay them but a visit,
Is the feeling of her pupils,
They would all arise to bless her,
For the many smiles she gave them,
For her friendly admonitions,
For her wise and good instructions.

We shall now quit Minnie Volo,
With this offered benediction:
Minnie Volo live forever
In the hearts and minds of loved ones.

VII.

BONUS.

WE shall now go on to tell you
Of another worthy teacher:
We shall tell you now of Bonus,
Who is quite a model teacher:
He is always in the school-room
Very early in the morning,
And he takes the greatest interest
In the pupils he is training:
And the pupils love their teacher,
And they prize the school so highly,
That they hail, with smiling faces,
The returning of school-hours.

He convinces all around him,
By his actions and his conduct,
That he is their friend most truly.

Bonus has the best of order :
He himself is very quiet ;
He walks softly through the school-room,
And his voice is low and soothing ;
Hence he ne'er disturbs his pupils,
While they are engaged in study :
And the children, too, are quiet,
Since they learn, by good example,
How to keep the best of order.
'Tis a secret of some value,
To a teacher who is noisy,
That the quiet of his school-room
May depend on his own conduct.

Every class and recitation
He conducts with perfect system.

Bonus has, as I may tell you,
Rules of order few and simple,

Such as ne'er confuse his pupils.
His idea very fully
(Balance-wheel in all his system)
Is expressed in one short sentence,
It is this, "Do right," this only,
This alone, and no addition.

Every thing he makes so simple
To the minds of his young pupils
That they promptly understand it.
And he keeps a memorandum,
Into which he writes suggestions,
And much useful information,
Which may prove to his advantage.

He is quite a finished scholar,
And a very active teacher;
He makes all the children anxious,
By his wise and happy process,
To gain wisdom and true culture,
And prepare for useful service:
Bonus studies how to please them,

How to wake their minds from slumber;
Every day he gives a puzzle,
Or a question, to be answered,
To be answered on the next day,
Which obliges all to study.

He excites to competition
Every pupil in the school-room,
By some lively exercises:
Yet such novel entertainments
Are not made to be his hobbies,
But are used with greatest caution
By this apt, ingenious tutor,
Who keeps every thing in motion,
And who keeps their minds so active
That they learn without an effort.

He recalls his childhood blunders,
How his mind was then unskilful;
He recalls his mode of study;
He remembers how his teachers
Failed to clear his difficulties,

And he guards against their errors.
Of this branch he now is teaching,
He recalls the knotty problems
Which his mind so much bewildered,
When he undertook the study:
Then he sets about his labors,
And makes every thing so simple
That the children feel delighted.
He ne'er does their labor for them,
But he indicates the method,
So that they may do the labor
And secure the mental profit.

Oft in solitude he queries,
“How shall I present this study?
In what order shall my questions
Be submitted to the pupils,
So that all may comprehend them?”
And he understands the branches,
All about the various studies,
Ere he undertakes to teach them.

Bonus, being so familiar
With the branches he is teaching,
Always brings some useful knowledge,
Some collateral information,
That's not mentioned in the text-book,
Into every recitation.

He oft calls upon his patrons,
Often asks their friendly counsel,
Takes away wrong prepossessions,
And so wins their kind attachment,
That they feel an int'rest in him,
In his school and in his teaching.

Bonus passes into comp'ny,
Not to show his store of knowledge,
Not to challenge good opinion,
But to gain some information,
And to teach, by good example,
Those who take him as their model.
In his conduct he is manly,
In his motions he is active,

In his spirit he is gentle ;
In his morals, without blemish :
He lives for a great hereafter,
And he points those youths to heaven
Who come under his instructions.

VIII.

PATRONS AND PUPILS.

IF I were to write of patrons,
I might tell you many strange things
Of old-fogy sort of people,
Who were much opposed to free schools,
Much opposed to education;
And oft spoke against their teacher
In the presence of their children.
It is hard and it is painful
For a teacher to have charge of
Those who're taught to disrespect him;
It is foolish, it is wicked,
For the parents to be prompting

Children to denounce their teacher.

I might tell you, too, of parents
Who were angry at the teacher
For insisting that their children
Should procure some useful school-books,
Which they greatly stood in need of.
I might also tell of persons
Who at heart disliked the teacher,
For not paying frequent visits
To their uninviting daughters.
Many troubles thus engendered,
Have been told me by some teachers,
Who tell strange and funny stories
Of some very silly patrons,
Whom they blame for difficulties.
They tell of some senseless persons
Who find fault with every teacher :
Though their children oft are absent,
Often indolent and tardy,
Often failing in their studies ;

Yet when they improve but slowly,
They denounce the teacher for it,
Hoping to get up a jarring
Which may end in his expulsion.

If I were to write of pupils,
I might tell of strapping big boys,
Rude, ungracious, spiteful fellows,
Who are sent to school the short days,
In the coldest part of winter,
When but little they accomplish
If they stay at home to labor;
And who always study mischief,
Talk of turning out the teacher,
Think of starting a rebellion;
Hence the slightest provocation
Is the signal for a battle
'Twixt the rebels and their ruler.
I might tell of lazy pupils—
I might tell of stupid pupils—
Since of pupils there are many

Who have squandered in their youth-time
Many golden hours and moments.
There are many lads and lasses
Who are vulgar in their manners,
Who are rude and growing ruder,
Who are hateful in their habits,
Who are impudent and saucy,
And who think but very little
Of attempts at growing better.
I might also tell of children
Who are not controlled by parents,
Who sometimes their parents govern,
And expect to rule the teacher,
Or at least refuse subjection
When they go to be instructed.
I might tell of vicious children,
Who seem born to be unruly,
Who are mischievous and stubborn,
Who are talkative and restless,
Who are spiteful and malicious,

And remind you of young demons:
Sometimes girls with upturned noses
Make the most outlandish faces
When they think no teacher sees them.

But we write no more of pupils,
Nor tell more about the patrons,
Till we give you a full hist'ry
In some hours of future leisure.

CONCLUSION.

WHEN we view the world of teachers,
We may see there is a difference
In the characters and manners
Of those who impart instruction
To the rising generation.

Some are manly, some are foppish,
Some are wise, and some are foolish,
Some are pious, some are wicked,
Some are kind, and some are surly,
Some are prudent, some are simple,
Some are thoughtless and conceited;
Some, though moral, have no learning,

Some have learning, but bad morals ;
Some improve the precious moments,
Some waste all their leisure hours ;
Some teach scholars to be careful
And to speak the truth with boldness ;
Some teach scholars to be careless
And to use improper language ;
Some teach scholars true politeness,
By good precepts teach that lesson ;
Some teach scholars impoliteness,
Plainly teach it by example ;
Some make no attempts at order,
Others try without succeeding,
While yet others are successful.

Should I now attempt to tell you
All the errors that are common
And that need to be corrected,
I might write *ad infinitum* :
But 'tis said that "one fault-mender
Is worth more than ten fault-finders."

Let us here exhort the teacher
To be moral, to be studious,
Honest and sincere in all things;
Conscious of his high position,
Mindful of his chosen duty;
For the teacher's bad example
May lead many youths to ruin.
He should never speak in favor
Of a special church or order,
But should ever strive to teach them
Reverence for the Holy Bible,
Reverence for its gracious Author;
And he should attempt to teach them
To avoid all evil habits,
And to turn from sin with boldness.
Mental culture is a mischief
If the heart is not enlightened
By the rays of God's good Spirit.
Let each teacher try sincerely
To add lustre to his calling,

And so elevate the standard
Of this great and good profession.
Oh! remember that your pupils
Have of life one seed-time only,
And if they mis-spend this seed-time,
Precious youth, life's golden moments,
They can ne'er regain their losses.

Therefore, let me say to teachers,
Though I've told you many hard things,
And might tell you things much harder,
Do not now become disheartened,
But exalt your noble mission,
And rewards will surely follow.

Teachers, do your duty fully,
Elevate your aims and standards,
Purify your thoughts and motives,
Fill your souls with noble feelings,
Think that brighter days are coming—
Days of purer light and knowledge,
When the teacher's high vocation

Shall receive more worthy honors.

In conclusion, then, I pray you,
Heed these closing admonitions;
Labor well for all your pupils,
Labor for their minds' improvement,
Labor for their social training,
Labor for their souls' best welfare;
Their high destiny rememb'ring;
Mindful of your lofty function;
And the God of Heaven bless you
With the teacher's richest payment,
The reward of duty well done,
Which is more than crowns of laurel

'THE END.







